

Minutes



Council

Date: 26 November 2019

Time: 5.00 pm

Present: Councillors J Cleverly, P Cockeram, M Cornelious, D Davies, M Evans, D Fouweather, G Giles, J Guy, D Harvey, I Hayat, Councillor R Jeavons, M Kellaway, M Linton, D Mayer, Councillor J Mudd, M Rahman, J Richards, T Suller, H Thomas, K Thomas, C Townsend, Councillor R Truman, R White, K Whitehead, D Wilcox, D Williams, G Berry, J Clarke, V Dudley, Y Forsey, R Hayat, P Hourahine, J Hughes, J Jordan, L Lacey, S Marshall, W Routley, H Townsend and J Watkins

Apologies: Councillors K Critchley, M Al-Nuaimi, C Evans, C Ferris, C Jenkins, R Mogford, A Morris, M Spencer, T Watkins, M Whitcutt and T Holyoake

1. Preliminaries

i. To receive any apologies for absence

The Monitoring Officer reported apologies for absence.

ii. To receive any declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

iii. To receive any announcements by the Mayor

The Mayor announced that Baroness Wilcox was standing down as Leader of the Council to take up her role in the House of Lords. He formally thanked her on behalf of the Council for her hard work as Leader and she was presented with gifts from the Chief Executive on behalf of senior officers and by Councillor Mudd on behalf of the elected members, as a token of their appreciation.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 10th September 2019, were confirmed as a true record.

3. Appointments

Councillor Baroness Wilcox nominated Councillor Jane Mudd; Councillor R Truman seconded this. Councillor Mudd declared an interest in the item, with no amendments.

Resolved: Councillor Jane Mudd was unanimously appointed as Leader of the Council

(a) To consider any other consequential appointments

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Jane Mudd then announced her Cabinet appointments as follows:-

Councillor Jeavons – Deputy Leader
Councillor Rahman – Cabinet Member for Assets
Councillor Davies – Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development.

Councillor C Townsend queried the cost of the additional post, however, it was noted that there were no additional posts created in the Cabinet, although the portfolios and Cabinet Member titles had changed

The Leader then moved, and it was seconded by Councillor Jeavons, that Councillor Hughes be appointed as the new Chair of Licensing Committee There were no further amendments or nominations.

Resolved: that Councillor Hughes be appointed as Chair of Licensing Committee

(b) To consider the proposed appointments set out in the report

Councillor Harvey moved the appointments set out in the Report, as agreed by the Business managers, subject to the following amendments

Mrs Beverly Perkins to be appointed LEA Governor of Gaer Primary School, instead of Councillor Ibrahim Hyatt.

Councillor Ibrahim Hayat to be removed a LEA Governor at Tredegar Park, and appointed as LEA Governor for Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed.

Subject to these amendments, the appointments were moved and seconded;

Cllr Whitehead referred to the Newport High School Governor's appointment and suggested that there was no representation from the Bettws Ward Members. Parents had made requests that ward members should represent the residents.

In response, Councillor Harvey mentioned that Councillor Whitehead stood down as school governor for Newport High School so that one of his ward colleagues may take up a position.

In relation to this item the majority were in favour of the motion and the proposed appointments with four abstentions.

Resolved: That the following appointments be agreed.

Governing Body	Appointments	Nominations Received / Vacancy
Glan Lyn Primary School	LA Governor LA Governor Officer	Councillor Kellaway Neil Davies Howard Mason
Gaer Primary School	LA Governor	Beverley Perkins
Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed	LA Governor	Councillor I Hayat
Pillgwenny Primary School	LA Governor	Councillor I Hayat
John Frost High School	LA Governor	Kay Price
Glasllwch Primary School	LA Governor	Mr Allan Hyland
Rogerstone Primary School	LA Governor	Keith Martin

Newport High School	LA Governor	Richard Shuttleworth
Caerleon High School	LA Governor	Owen James
Federated School of Eveswell & Somerton Primary School	LA Governor	Councillor Berry (Eveswell Primary) Councillor Guy (Somerton Primary) Alan Speight (Currently Chair of Governors at Somerton Primary) Ben Adams (Currently on the Governing Body at Somerton Primary)
Maindee Primary School	LA Governor	Anne Drewett
Tredegar Park Primary School	LA Governor	Vacancy

In addition to the above appointments, Councillor Harvey informed Council of the need to agree dispensations for Councillor absences, in accordance with section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972:

Resolved:

- (a) To approve and extend absence of Councillor Critchley for a further six months
- (b) To approve six months absence for Councillor Holyoake
- (c) To note the decision(s) of the Appointments Sub-Committee in relation to the appointment of interim statutory officers

The Council noted the Minutes of the Interim Chief Executive Appointments sub-Committee of 1 October 2019 and adopted and ratified their decision to appoint Sheila Davies as Interim Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service.

The Mayor announced that the Acting Strategic Director for People would be Chris Humphrey, Head of Adult and Community Services, who would assume the statutory role of Director of Social services pending a permanent appointments

Resolved:

That the interim statutory officer appointments be adopted and ratified.

4. Police Issues

Superintendent Mike Richards gave a brief update on activity across three policing sectors within Newport.

- The City Centre Team understood the importance of a safe and thriving City Centre and the impact that antisocial activity, aggressive begging and associated disorders with the night time economy would have in relation to this. There had been a significant reduction in shoplifting by 50% and charges had been made along with custodial sentences, which was a positive outcome for local businesses. There was a strengthened number of Police on patrol on a Friday and Saturday, bringing in Police from neighbouring authorities, such as Monmouthshire. Operation Prevent saw a number of temporary road closures in the City Centre on a trial basis over the week-end and the Police received positive feedback from business owners. Installation of bollards within the City Centre was also being looked into as a longer-term measure.
- The East Newport team had a busy couple of months with Halloween and Bonfire Night. There had been a recent spate of antisocial behaviour and damage caused to buses. The team were committed to early intervention and prevention. The teams were visiting schools with the Mini Police project having a positive outcome. Alway Station had opened during Halloween with a spooky theme and over 100 families visited the station.

A successful drugs warrant had been issued in Lliswerry with a closure order to one property.

- The West Newport team had seen the closure of premises in Pottery Terrace and Clarence Place in relation to selling of drugs. There was a multi- agency action day in Maesglas Community Centre and was a great success. Police were continuing to monitor the use of off-road bikes within Bettws. In relation to Allt-yr-yn, there were rough sleepers near the Crown Court, four of which had had been removed. Finally, there were two creeper burglaries in Rogerstone during October, where vehicles were stolen. Fortunately, arrests were made with a court appearance pending.

Questions from Councillors:

Councillor Jeavons thanked the Superintendent for the ongoing work in Lliswerry and asked if the Police would assist with the Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) team and enforcement of criminal parking offences, such as dangerous parking outside schools. In response, it was advised that they were collaborating with the CPE officers and the Mini Police; a new school initiative had been trying to educate drivers during school drop off time, which was a success.

Councillor Harvey asked the Superintendent to thank Inspector Cawley for the swift action with regard to anonymous calls. The Spooky Police Station was well-received by residents and re-humanised the police. There was one issue that residents had raised regarding two men; one with on a bike, who were calling on residents and asking if they could change their gas and electric. The Superintendent advised that he would put out an alert for residents not to answer their doors at night to anyone looking suspicious.

Councillor M Evans referred to the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) in relation to begging around cash points and ticket machines and whether this could be revisited with the Police. The Superintendent had agreed that this was a challenge and not exclusive to Newport, however the Superintendent would meet with the Inspector to seek his views on amendment of the PSPO.

Councillor Marshall mentioned a recent article on the BBC website relating to the possession of knives/stop, search initiative, and asked how successful this was in Newport, or if there were more effective preventative measures that could be used. The Superintendent advised that he was aware of the article covering the South Wales Police area. Stop search was an important tool although knife crime issues in Newport was not significant. The Superintendent was happy to meet with Councillor Marshall and provide figures.

Councillor Guy gave figures on domestic related crimes, which had increased from the previous year and asked if Police were receiving the required training and liaising with multi agencies to deal with the problem. The Superintendent advised that it was very difficult for officers to investigate domestic crime; however, it was treated as a priority for Police and the Council and was high on the agenda for training. There was a successful multi agency safeguarding hub in place to tackle domestic violence.

Councillor D Williams asked if the sale of Nitrous Oxide canisters was being regulated and what could be done to prevent children purchasing these from shops. The Superintendent would look into this and get back to the Councillor.

Councillor J Watkins asked for an update on the reported security issue with View Point in Christchurch, which was reported at last Council. The Superintendent advised that he had discussed the issue today with Inspector Cawley but there had been no reports of increased antisocial behaviour.

Councillor R Truman referred to the change in Community Safety Warden (CSW) hours to allow them to work in daylight hours. This had been a successful campaign and during October, there were 77 fixed penalty notices for dog fouling, fly tipping and aggressive begging. It was hoped that this was the best way forward and the Council was looking to continue joint working with CSWs and the Police to show that Newport City Centre was a safe place to visit and shop. The Superintendent agreed and gave assurances of his continued support.

Councillor Lacey asked the Superintendent to thank Inspector Cawley for addressing the recent bus incidents and requested that the update be passed on to residents to assure them that the issue was being address. The Superintendent would monitor the progress of this behaviour although there had been no incidents reported recently.

Councillor Whitehead referred to an incident, which occurred in Bettws that day. The Superintendent advised Council that he was on Gold duty and had deployed firearm officers to Bettws and although the incident was downgraded, it was preferable to deploy officers who were suitably kitted rather than an on duty officer.

Councillor Forsey thanked officers for supporting the launch of the Mini Police in Rogerstone and asked if other schools within Newport had expressed an interest. The Superintendent agreed that this was a massive success, which started in three schools, but had now been extended to 13 schools and was an expanding scheme with more schools to be added in the new academic year.

Councillor Suller asked for an update on the 'boy racers' in Marshfield. The Superintendent advised that he had recently met with a Community Councillor and as a result had asked the local team to form a multi-agency group to resolve these issues.

A Terms of Reference was to be drafted involving the Civil Parking Enforcement team to tackle the problem. Councillor Suller also thanked the Police on their action in response to a landslide in Marshfield recently.

5. Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report - 2018/19

Under the Equality Act (2010), the Council was required to report annually on the progress it made against the nine Strategic Equality Objectives contained within its Strategic Equality Plan. The Equality Act also required Local Authorities to publish staff equalities data, which this report also contained.

This report, previously received by Cabinet was the third Annual Report on the progress Newport City Council had made towards meeting the Equality Objectives set out in the authority's second four year Strategic Equality Plan (SEP), as approved by Council on 3 March 2016.

The Leader presented the report and moved for the plan to be adopted by the Council, Councillor Mayer seconded this.

Councillor K Thomas welcomed the report, which she felt was very well presented and was pleased to see the action points within the plan that had been addressed.

Councillor Hughes referred to the Welsh Language Standards and welcomed the hard work carried out by the officers, particularly on the collaboration work with the equalities team.

Councillor Giles referred action plan along with the wonderful work with the Newport Youth council, which pledged to seek young people's views on Council policies. NEETS had also made a significant impact over the past five years with a reduction of out of work young people from 4.7% to 1.1%, this was below the Welsh Average for a third consecutive year.

Councillor Cockeram thanked the officers who had worked extremely hard for their excellent report and referred to the support team who supported six thousand people to maintain tenancy within Newport. These were excellent statistics, for which the team were thanked once again.

Resolved

That Council unanimously approved the final monitoring report for publication on the Council's website, in accordance with statutory deadlines.

6. Democratic Services Committee Annual Report - 2018/19

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 required each council to establish a Democratic Services Committee. The Measure prescribed the functions of the committee and required it to make a report at least annually to the Council.

The Chair of the Committee presented the report and outlined the work undertaken by the Committee for the year. It was noted that the Democratic Services Committee agreed the annual report attached as Appendix A on 24 October 2019.

In addition, Appendix B was the annual report of the Head of Law and Regulation, on behalf of the Head of Democratic Services, presented to the Democratic Services Committee on 24 October 2019 in order to review the adequacy of staff to support members.

Councillor Fouweather moved the report, which was seconded by Councillor H Thomas.

Councillor M Evans referred to the Presiding Officer item, which went to the Committee on 24 October 2019. The Monitoring Officer advised that the Minutes would be brought to Council following the approval at the next meeting of the Democratic Services Committee.

Councillor Hourahine referred to the Boundary Commission Changes. The Monitoring Officer advised that there would be further information regarding this in the New Year.

Resolved

- That Council unanimously received the Committee's annual report to the Council in order to meet the requirements of the Local Government Measure, as presented by the Chair of the Democratic Services Committee.
- That Council noted the content of the Head of Democratic Services Annual Report, as supporting evidence that the Committee had carried out its responsibility to review the adequacy of staff to support members

7. Standards Committee Annual Report - 2018/19

The Report presented to Council the fifth Annual Report of the Standards Committee for 2017/18. The Annual Report provided information to the Council about the work carried out by the Committee during the previous 12 months, identifying any specific issues that had arisen.

Councillor H Thomas presented the annual report on behalf of the Chair of Standards.

Councillor H Thomas moved report, which was seconded by Councillor Hourahine seconded. Councillor Hourahine also thanked Mr P Westwood for Chairing the Standards Committee.

Resolved

That Council unanimously received the Standards Committee Annual Report for 2017/18 and to note the forward work programme.

8. **Questions to the Leader of the Council**

The Leader gave the following announcements, before proceeding with questions:

The New Leader took the opportunity to thank Baroness Wilcox and her colleagues for their support during the nomination for Leadership. The Leader also thanked her family, and the community of Malpas for their support, which meant a lot, especially as she was a Newport resident, born in Malpas.

The Leader named three individuals particularly, including her father, David Taylor and Ron Jones.

The Leader continued addressing the Council with mention to the difficult and challenging times faced by the Council and the need to work together.

Leader's Questions

Councillor M Evans thanked the Leader and continued with his question in relation to budget proposals, requesting that the Leader would extend the consultation period, as Caerphilly Council had started their consultation period much earlier. In addition to this it was suggested that apart from any rise in inflation, there would be a freeze on Council tax increases to council.

The Leader could not comment on activities of other authorities and advised that officers were still developing proposals around the draft budget. Therefore, it would not be appropriate for her to comment at this stage.

Councillor M Evans was invited to ask a supplementary, where he reiterated that he hoped for the sake of Newport residents that the only increase to the council tax would reflect the rate of inflation with no further increases by the Council.

Councillor Whitehead congratulated the New Leader on her appointment and referred to the antisocial behaviour in Bettws and the lack of provision for youth and children, such as youth clubs.

The Leader was aware of challenges faced by youth across the city. There was a mobile youth service in place and the contribution from volunteers across the city was valued, this included the help of Councillor Cleverly. There was a scheme at Newport High where former Captain of Newport County Captain, David Pike was working with young people to build confidence and self-esteem. The Leader would be more than happy to speak with Councillor Whitehead at length regarding this issue, if he would like to make an appointment.

Councillor C Townsend asked if there was an update on an all Member seminar on litter and street cleaning as discussed at July Council. There will still a high amount of litter and fly tipping within the City Centre and not one ward could claim to be litter free and it was a public health hazard.

The Leader acknowledged that it was an important question and would arrange an all member seminar in the near future. The Leader also mentioned that it would be remiss of her not to acknowledge volunteers that help keep Newport tidy, including Councillors Forsey and Councillor M Evans. Hygiene factors were very important and all members needed to be aware of all the activities.

Councillor Hughes requested an update on regeneration across the city.

The Leader highlighted the progress on some of the projects across the City, this included the Commercial Street development by Pobl which was specifically being developed for over

55s, and was transforming the appearance of the area. The design of the building was iconic and the Leader had received many positive comments. The project was contributing to the regeneration of the City Centre, making it a place where people wanted to live and encourage the day and night-time economy. The former IAC Building was on track to be completed in Spring 2020. The former Chartist Tower was almost complete in its transformation into a four star hotel, the Leader had recently visited the building, which boasted stunning views of the City. The regeneration projects within Newport were slowly leading to a positive transformation to City Centre and surrounding environment. The Market Arcade regeneration project was also underway with funding from Heritage Lottery Funding and the Welsh Government. The Market Arcade had independent business in that area, which contributed to the night-time economy. There was also funding from the Welsh Government thematic strand of the tri funding scheme to support owners to regenerate their facades. These projects helped to create the vibrancy and thriving atmosphere across Newport. The Leader was very pleased with the progress of the schemes and was looking forward to bringing more projects to the Council in due course.

9. Questions to the Cabinet Members

i. Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

Councillor J Watkins asked the following question that had been submitted:

'Can the Cabinet Member reveal the amount of the Council total overall underspend from the last financial year and if any of that underspend has been spent on Newport's Educational services'

The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills responded:

The Councils Revenue Outturn position went to Cabinet on 22 May and therefore this information has been in the public domain for some time.

At the end of the financial year 2018/19 there was a £2,383k revenue underspend. Eleven areas of investment were agreed by Cabinet. From this underspend, £250k was used for the purposes of education.

Supplementary question:

The forecasted overspend for schools in this year's budget was approximately £2.6M and the forecasted reserves was estimated at -£2.75M. Did the Cabinet Member therefore feel that the underspend last year could have supported schools in wiping out their debt rather than spending on reserve projects.

The Cabinet Member advised that this question would need to be referred to the Chief Executive or Head of Finance as they would be able to provide a more detailed response.

ii. Councillor Joan Watkins asked the following question that had been submitted:

'Does the Cabinet Member feel that Newport Secondary Schools are adequately staffed by sufficient teachers?'

The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills responded:

Individual Governing Bodies control secondary school delegated budgets and have the responsibility to set an appropriate staffing structure in accordance with the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.

This is therefore outside of my remit as Cabinet Member for Education and Skills.

Supplementary:

This was raised because one school in Newport was down by 10 staff members and not all had been replaced by supply teachers.

The Cabinet Member reiterated that the decision by the Governing Bodies and not the Cabinet Member or Council.

iii. Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure

Councillor Ray Mogford was not present however the question and response was recorded as the following:

'Does the Cabinet Member for Leisure believe that the new Pedal Bike Scheme at Tredegar Park will be good value for money'.

The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure responded:

Yes - the scheme is value for money, as it provides equity by allowing children and adults to take part in a physical activity together with their friends and families. It enables equal access, helping to transform lives through a sport for all ages and abilities. As promoted by Disability Sport Wales, the cycle scheme facilitates 'sport for all' by supporting diversity in leisure, allowing children and their families or carers, to enjoy a leisure activity together, that would not be possible within a standard sporting setting.

10. Standards Committee Minutes

Minutes of the meeting from April and July 2019 were noted.

11. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 28 January 2020 at 5pm in the Council Chambers.

The meeting terminated at 6.50 pm

This page is intentionally left blank